



# USAID | COLOMBIA

## E-Bulletin

### State Entities Pledge to Coordinate Public Investment in Consolidation Zones via Decree

**Thirty-five entities at the central level commit to interagency coordination mechanism for the planning, implementation, investment and evaluation of public resources in consolidation zones**



Consolidation in Cordoba Alliance; Agreement about income generation, health, education and security. November 8, 2013  
Source: Consolidation Unit

The Government of Colombia (GOC) relies on the Consolidation Policy to consolidate peace by establishing a state presence and promoting public investment in historically underserved areas, including those affected by conflict. In response to a request for technical assistance from the Office of the High Presidential Counselor for National Security, the USAID Public Policy Program (USAID) has been providing ongoing technical assistance to strengthen the GOC's capacity to implement this policy by bolstering interagency coordination among national entities in order to ensure sustainable impacts on the ground and guarantee improved quality of life for citizens in targeted zones.

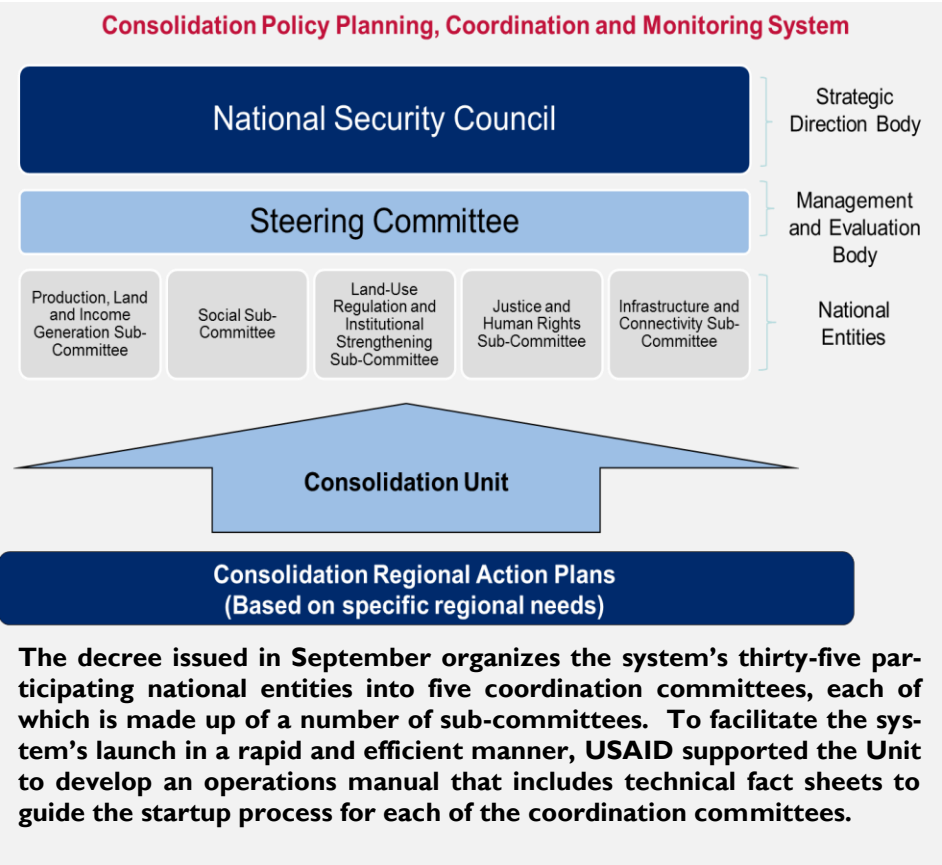
In what constitutes a monumental advance in this effort, the Office of the President issued Decree 1894 of 2013 on September 4. The decree, signed by fourteen (14) ministries and five (5) administrative units,<sup>1</sup> created the Consolidation Policy Planning, Coordination and Monitoring System. In addition to promoting coordination among the thirty-five (35) participating state entities, the development of new regulations such as Decree 1894 may also allow the GOC to formulate approaches that could help it generate firm policy positions during the ongoing peace negotiations. Furthermore, this new coordination instrument could be used as a platform for the design of future policy mechanisms crucial to the successful implementation of any eventual peace agreement.

While the implementation of this system to its full extent will take a number of years and large budgetary administrative commitments, which is beyond the scope and duration of this specific USAID program, the impact of USAID's support is already evidenced by the GOC's public commitment to promote investment, align government spending and monitor progress in consolidation zones. In doing so, the GOC has formally pledged to bring crucially needed public

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<sup>1</sup>Signatories include: Ministry of the Interior; Ministry of Finance and Public Credit; Ministry of Justice and Law; Ministry of Defense; Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development; Ministry of Health and Social Protection; Ministry of Mines and Energy; Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development; Ministry of Housing, City and Territory; Ministry of Information Technology and Communication; Ministry of Transportation; Ministry of Culture; Administrative Department of the Office of the President; Department of Social Prosperity; National Planning Department; Administrative Department of Public Service; and the Administrative Department of Sport, Recreation, Physical Activity and Use of Free Time.

services (including justice, health, education, housing, and transportation, among others) to conflictive and marginalized areas of the country.



Until the issuance of this decree, government entities' resource pledges to consolidation areas were made on a voluntary basis and were rarely implemented. In addition, the Consolidation Unit, in charge of coordinating a substantial annual budget of USD 1.1 billion, relied solely on individual entities' political assurances, which were subject to shifting political winds. The GOC also lacked a robust and formal instrument to confirm that entities had actually delivered on earlier commitments. As a result, USAID worked with the GOC to design a comprehensive system that the Consolidation Unit could use to maximize the impact of public investments in consolidation zones to better respond to citizen priorities and restore confidence in the government.

A fully-functional system will allow the Consolidation Unit to have more control over its resources and will empower it to be more strategic in its budget planning and execution processes. It will also enable the Unit to collect more accurate information about different sector's commitments, which will lay the groundwork for more harmonized interventions. The issuance of the decree and resultant coordination system also paves the way for the Unit to design comprehensive strategies that recognize the distinctive and diverse features of each consolidation zone, which in turn facilitates sectorial entities delivery of services and public goods in a more focused and flexible manner in a way that responds to citizens' direct and specific needs.

In the near future, monitoring the results of the consolidation system's implementation will be essential. It is obvious that this tool could represent a powerful mechanism to respond to real regional needs, even beyond those faced in emergency contexts. The system is designed as a transitional solution and may be very useful for strengthening regional development in the event of a post-conflict scenario. However, it is also clear that this is not the ultimate tool to enable municipalities and affected communities to resolve their most significant needs to truly build their own future.